



Marion Superior Court

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ELECTRONIC FILING: A NEW WAY OF DOING BUSINESS IN MARION COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION COURTROOMS

Some exciting changes are taking place in the civil courtrooms of the Marion Superior Court that will benefit law firms, litigants and the taxpayers that fund our county justice system. Thirteen civil courts, including Circuit Court, are taking part in an electronic filing project that was approved by the Indiana Supreme Court last December.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in Marion County civil filings, particularly in the area of mortgage foreclosure and collections. Approximately 57% of all civil filings fall into these categories. For the Court, this creates an enormous volume of paper to manage as cases move toward resolution. The Court must then permanently archive or store paper files.

I, along with Judge Thomas J. Carroll, Judge David Shaheed, and Judge S.K. Reid have been working with Lexis-Nexis File & Serve to bring electronic filing to Marion County for all mortgage foreclosure and collections cases. I'm pleased to announce that we now have a program in place that is secure and easy to use. On behalf of the Marion Superior Court, I want to ask for your participation as we move our justice system into the 21st Century.

While electronic filing is now a voluntary option, the Marion Superior Court encourages you to use it. Looking at the growing trend of e-filing in courtrooms across America, it is just a matter of time before it becomes standard practice for all cases.

For example, both Federal and State Courts throughout the United States have moved to electronic filing of cases and pleadings. The Federal Courts began rolling out their case management Electronic Case File (ECF) system in Bankruptcy Courts in 2001, in District Courts in 2002, and in Appellate Courts in 2005. In addition, thirteen states and the District of Columbia have implemented statewide Electronic Filing Systems. Closer to home, the Indiana Clerk of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, and Tax Court no longer mail copies of their opinions to counsel and trial court judges. Those opinions are now sent exclusively by e-mail.

The Marion Superior Court understands this is a huge operational change for everyone, including Judges and our own court staff; but change we must. Our budgets are being reduced while case volume is increasing. As good stewards of the taxpayers money, we must harness all the benefits of technology that save time, money and perhaps most important, create a more efficient and expedited justice system for all.

So, as an attorney, why file electronically? E-filing has many benefits for lawyers and litigants, perhaps one of the most important is that motions may be ruled on quicker because judges may access documents within minutes of filing. Also, all parties can now be electronically served in seconds. Cases and pleading may be filed 24/7 with no expenses associated with copying or transporting physical documents to the courthouse. The system is easy to use and allows for quick online access to cases and pleadings by the courts, attorneys, pro se litigants, as well as the public.

Training is free and LexisNexis provides 24/7 customer service support. I would invite each of you and your staff to learn more about electronic filing by visiting www.lexisnexis.com/fileandserve.

On behalf of the Court, thank you for your support.

Judge Heather Welch

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Civil Term Chairperson